1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub-[614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only 621 certain units are the nuclear family and the 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe*." He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie*," the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [p.160-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

439 177 This trade relationship has been noticed by many of the earlier travelers, some of whom referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Burrows, 1898), while others found it to be quite [114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy of the environment, which, in the same work, he claims is responsible, through its very abundance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy culture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the [613] trading is carried out. He says that there is, however, a definite hereditary relationship between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

• 594

[342] Individual families each have their own beehive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933, 219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a gigantic windscreen housing several families in an otherwise normal camp. Although each [621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate residence, as a social unit it is far less significant [613] than the band (a patrilineage, according to Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside which it could not exist.

[P. 176-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each woman regards this part of the camp as her property. It is there that the family lives: the food is prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the hut entrance; the children play near the hut; the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs, guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping her in some way or another. Visitors do not enter the hut but wait outside where they meet any member of the family. Owing to the custom of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women may all be strangers to one another. In some cases most of the women come from the same neighboring band, so their communal interest is greater, but generally they come from widely dispersed bands and are more interested in their own marital families than they are in their new band as a whole. The men, however, are bound by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual interest in the band, as such, and in the particular territory within which it moves. Conflict between the hunting band and individual family, then, is generally a conflict between men and women, and, by enlargement, between two or more bands—the band of the men and those of the women involved.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.177-A]

621 609 613 own lineages and can at all times return to them or count on their aid, but economically they are members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 512 592 Among the archers a woman's daily activity is concerned primarily with the welfare of the individual family and only indirectly with that of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

[854]

593 594 62 Her husband spends less time near the family hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in general, however, a family eats together, though the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

593 594 264

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE NET HUNTERS (AFTER PUTNAM)

[P.194-A]

THE SOCIAL UNIT

621 [114] PATRICK PUTNAM'S (1948) DESCRIPTION of the net-hunting Pygmy band corresponds in essence to that given by Schebesta; the most noticeable difference is in the matter of size. [614] [594] The composition described is the same, i.e., a number of nuclear families tracing descent through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named.

[361]

FIG. 16. Plan of net-hunters' camp (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[614] for whom they are named. The patriclan, however, is generally scattered and is certainly not synonymous with the band. The size of the band is determined at each extreme by the hunting and gathering needs of a cohabitive group.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

• 594 The wives never lose their feelings for their
602 own band, and a woman will either invite some
574 of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

593 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping:
621 all other family activity takes place outside.
[591] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is
[184] taken up all over the camp. As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most important consideration for the Mbuti is the present constitution of the band. Absent members of the band, regardless of lineage, are soon forgotten as economic members, though lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than three generations). Consequently, the question of economic allegiance among the net hunters does not arise even for the first generation resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. Any considerations that do arise are invariably connected with the relationship between the individual family and its villager host. When an Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically changes his allegiance to the local villagers who act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district but, failing that, will take action against the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, and that its welfare, together with individual inclination, should be the prime concern when a question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

[p 220- D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

421 224 lazy hunter and his family go without meat; an idle woman goes without vegetables and has no roof to her hut. The division of game obtained during a net hunt is the only division that includes everyone in the band, whether or not they attended the hunt. Even then we do not know whether those who did not attend had any arrangement with any of the actual hunters. Nets are frequently lent, as are spears. It may well be that absentee members of the hunt participate by proxy and in this way entitle themselves to a share. The division itself, as is mentioned above, is said to be subject to complicated rules.

• 594 224 421 Apart from the net hunt, which is essentially collective and cooperative and concerns the band, other forms of food quest are familial. A woman is entitled to what she finds, for herself and her family. Similarly a man, hunting 594 224 421 individually with bow and arrow, may claim as his own anything that he may bring in, though in such a case there is some doubt. Using bow and arrow he would be likely to bring in only small game, and rarely, these Mbuti being very poor shots. If however, he killed or found large game, such as an okapi, on his own, it would be

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-C]

most unlikely that the collective rules of division would not apply. It seems therefore to be a question of surplus. Every family is entitled to a minimum insured by the collective hunt and is equally entitled to the maximum that it can acquire and consume itself. Any surplus is not used for trade but becomes the share of the rest of the community. Maximum here must imply a correlation of capacity and decency. Putnam says that a woman who does not share the products of her gathering expedition with her friends (regardless of the quantity) is looked on with scorn. Similarly, when a man is sitting among his fellow hunters and his wife brings him a meal, he eats most of it himself but shares at least some with his companions. There is a definite preference in such sharing, but whether the amount of the portion depends on kinship or friendship or both is not clear in the sources under consideration.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of exogamy, this means that the "local group" is in fact the adult male community, to which are attached the wives and unmarried sisters or daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and their children (including boys up to their *nkumbi* initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.) does not deny the authority of the father in the family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source of conflict between husband and wife, but it is authority as a member of the lineage to which his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes no mention of women's associations other than individual friendship of neighbors who may work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is quite different. Among net hunters the band is primarily an economic unit. There is no such highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is vested not in any representative of the lineage but rather in the economically important and valuable members of the group. He stresses the part that women play in group discussions. Although their position may appear to be peripheral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underestimates the weight they carry in any discussion,

[P. 245-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies: FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tween villagers arising out of the migratory tendencies of "their" Mbuti.

The effective system is that each band maintains an exchange relationship with the village or villages closest to its hunting territory, and effectively the relationship is an exchange not between band and village, except as territorial units only, but between nuclear families or mere individuals. If the exchange relationship follows descent lines, it is no more than incidental. From the Mbuti point of view, in any case, it makes not the slightest difference. All villagers are animals to be "eaten" without discrimination. It only makes a difference from the villager point of view, the question of compensation of the rightful "owner" continually arising.

Leaving the theoretical system for the moment, and looking at the effective system of exchange, we find that the tendency to think of the relationship as hereditary, on the part of the villagers, is irrepressible. As far as the Mbuti are concerned, they pick and choose. As a child an Mbuti may grow accustomed to a number of "owners," as his parents move from band to band, or village to village. When he is old enough to hunt he will choose whichever "owner" happens to be convenient at the time, but if he does not get the treatment he expects, he will without hesitation get himself "adopted" by another villager, even in the same village. The only consideration countenanced by the Mbuti is their own convenience.

A wise villager will treat his Mbuti well, and in return will be able to get the minimum service from them without too much difficulty, and there are instances where such relationship has apparently persisted over several generations (see Table 1). But the contemporary situation militates against persistence. For instance, among the Epulu net-hunters one of the larger "clan" units that made up the total composition of the band was the Puemi clan. In its entirety it was claimed by a prominent Bira named Ngoma. But Ngoma had to spend most of his time in Mambasa, the administrative post some fifty miles from his village, so in his absence his Mbuti were divided, according to the Bira system of inheritance, between his two brothers, Isa and Takalili. But the system did not specify where the dividing line should be drawn, and in any case the Puemi had moved a number of miles in the opposite direction and were on the other side of the Epulu River, in the territory of Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe. There they formed allegiances to local villagers, ignored the demands of Isa and Takalili to return to hunt for them, saying that they were

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other.

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant change in structure related to the constant process of fission and fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern. At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant, however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, as it would in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it co-operate with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish village relationships, each by invoking a different context—the one *karé*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

594 621 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsibility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 860 The age group functions as a major institution of education, instructing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 857 883 [476] As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Children scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trapping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 626 627 [765] Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its members, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Further, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to unquestioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the *elima*, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, decides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The *molimo* horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again regardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their comprehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or prohibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is sometimes utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the nonlineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, regardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[82] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[57] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

62 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[428] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[82] an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 *Even fission and fusion are a part of family life,* as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P118]

CHAPTER 9

The Life Cycle

DAILY LIFE

621 The life of the nuclear family is so closely interwoven with that of
626 the band that it is not always easy or possible to separate which ac-
594 tivities and occasions are the concern of which. The difference is only one of degree, for even the most insignificant and routine action in the daily life of the family is potentially of major concern to the band as a whole. Thus a man seeking to borrow his brother's pipe may provide the occasion for a petty jealousy to flare up and divide the brothers, if not the camp (this case is quoted in full in the section on
62 Government). In fact, in a society where there is no formal legal in-
183 stitution for the redress of wrongs, individuals resort to self-help and forcibly bring their case to public attention by deliberately provoking an incident. It is important then that there should be a pattern of behavior that is generally accepted, and which covers every conceivable activity so that there may be some direction and constancy in the ensuing discussion. The degree of "general acceptance" is of course not of such rigidity as to preclude the flexibility necessary for the pursuit of justice. But beneath the evident ambivalence there is a recognizable pattern of things that should or should not be done. This pattern is sometimes most plain in matters that seem most trivial, such as the insistence that embers that fall from the fire should not simply be scooped or pushed back, but should be picked up and placed on top of the fire; the feeling that anyone passing through a stream *should* wash *himself*, or at least a part of *himself*, even if he crossed another turn of the same stream a few yards back. If anyone is silent and untalkative, this is considered unusual and unfortunate. If one trips up accidentally, or stumbles even while crossing the camp, without harming anyone or anything, there is a distinct air of reproach among the onlookers. Such patterns of generally accepted behavior

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is being done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted. Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to learn a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

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her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lullabies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or because some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and

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effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely.

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off.

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey.

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters.

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again.

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much

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Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness derives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net hunters.

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quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are ex-

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766 [768] two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 765 621 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes [778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 621 .594 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest context, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 765 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one

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765 152 midst. Family members also openly comment on all the things they should have done for the dead person but did not do. At times when one individual is particularly repentant, such as one old lady I saw who tied a noose around her neck, others will assist her. In this case the old lady was attacked by her own family, some of whom jumped on top of her, beating her to the ground, others grabbing the rope and tugging it, tightening the noose around her neck. There was never any question, however, that this was anything but a histrionic display. On a different occasion, when another old lady started stabbing herself with a knife, the band looked on unconcernedly because even when the blood was flowing freely they knew she would come to no harm; she was merely scratching the skin.

761 765 By contrast there is no actual attempt to lay the blame for death at any individual's door. The occasion may be made one for blaming people for not having behaved as they should have behaved, but death itself is accepted by the Mbuti as being perfectly natural. It does not [783] seem to be thought of as unclean or contaminating, and there is no purification ritual, or any ritual to speed the soul of the departed on its way. On one occasion a procession of Mbuti returning from the burial of one of their band proceeded directly to the wedding of an- [594] other member. The nuclear family concerned is under no restrictions, only under heavy pressure to forget the death as soon as possible. In wailing, instead of using the dead person's name the mourners will refer to him as "You who died in the morning," referring to whatever time the death took place. Those in the band not immediately related will not refer to the dead person even in this indirect way.

765 462 In various parts of the forest there are tales of a custom whereby female relatives of a dead man used to close the trails leading to the camp and guard them, wailing and singing. Anyone wishing to pass had to pay by leaving an arrow in a piece of soft wood left there for the purpose. Among the Budo, in the north, this is known as *unai*, and the net-hunters in that region call it *butuma*. They say that while the girls are wailing and singing the men are silent. After a week the girls stop and the men take over and sing joyful songs. The women's job is "to remember," they say, the men's "to forget." The Budo and Mbuti insist this is an old Mbuti custom. (Among the Epulu Mbuti it is certainly true that most of the wailing is done by women, but it is not formalized in this way.)

[152] [171] Among the Lesé the same custom is known as *ofa*. They say their women wailed for two or three months, and during this time the men

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became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten someone. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom called *masoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual concerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[1]

[1] The wider structural significance of the molimo is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

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death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis.

While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units insofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no particular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or brothers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping. It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[9]

Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in several animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

[9] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

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Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Ndaye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Bisia	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the forest, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunting fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's description of food offerings being made to the forest, except through villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste. It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals certain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for game are comparable in their political and religious connotations:

2: Turnbull E-8 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than others will lead immediately to ridicule.

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions concerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

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porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant marriage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible. More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relationship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are frequently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

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If the host band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange.

If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other.

Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than instances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible.

Interfamily Exchange

Although the above two areas of contact and interband relationship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month.

The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have

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already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considerations of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister exchange itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times, spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pattern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

2: Turnbull, E-S (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor political authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masini, who shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell out and moved into separate camps, it was Masini who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masini ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masini was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masini had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct relationship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would bring advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

throughout his life. It is also a question of friendship with the villager, but for him the relationship is further compelled by his belief in his own tribal lore, a compulsion not felt by the Mbuti. The Mbuti sometimes exploit this relationship with a *karé* as they may also do with their *kpara* for whom they feel no friendship, knowing that the strength of tribal lore, and the fear of supernatural sanctions upon themselves, will bring at least a grudging response.

Although essentially an individual relationship rather than a band relationship, failure on the part of an Mbuti to respond to his *karé* is considered by the villagers as a violation of village law, and can be made into a lineage/lineage or a band/village issue, but with predictable lack of success because of the absence of any effective agency of control. However, the attempt is sometimes made, and the band may at least be held responsible, in violation of *karé* brotherhood, for the actions of one of its members.

None of these formal relationships, then, brings about much effective economic exchange, and the political relationship is correspondingly ineffective. The mechanisms for political relationship are there, but their use is made impossible by the whole process of flux in Mbuti society. At the best those mechanisms are taken up and used momentarily when it is found to be mutually advantageous.

Individual Economic Relationships

There is, however, the last level, that of the nuclear family to the nuclear family, by which the band relates to a village. This is the effective level at which the bulk of economic exchange takes place among the Epulu Mbuti, and among most other net-hunting bands I have seen. In view of the flux that characterizes Mbuti society, it is indeed the only level that could provide any realistic basis of relationship.

It may not even necessarily be a family-to-family relationship. Individual members of the Mbuti family may go their own way and relate as such to village individuals. But once formed, these relationships are likely to remain fairly constant, for as long as the Mbuti family is hunting within that territory, or within reasonable reach. Several such attachments might be formed by the Mbuti, though generally not more than one in any one village. This leads to effective economic exchange but it provides no basis whatsoever for relating the band to the village, and it offers the villagers no more opportunity for control than they already have; namely, the fondness of the Mbuti for village luxuries.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

for village luxuries. Bribery, indeed, may be said to be the only effective control the villagers have over the Mbuti. But it is short-lived and costly, and is on an individual or familial basis at the most. As far as internal relations are concerned, the band clearly exists as a territorial unit composed of a number of nuclear families cooperating in economic food quest. The Epulu band, and nearly all others studied, are characterized by a composite nature, negating the possibility of lineal authority. Any form of central authority is further negated by the constant changing of band composition. Leadership exists in respect to different fields at different age levels, and is nowhere centered in a single individual. Any attempt at the assumption of individual authority, or even of excessive influence, is sharply countered by ridicule or ostracism.

There is consequently no central leadership, in the form of an individual or even of a council, with which the centralized village leadership can deal in political terms. Nor is there any lineal leadership, let alone any stable lineal unit, with which village lineal units can relate, except in theory. The institution of *karé* brotherhood is primarily an individual relationship, and although its abuse can enlarge the relationship to a band/village level, there is again no mechanism of effective relationship at that level. Therefore the *karé* relationship, insofar as it is effective, only relates individuals.

Effective economic relationship of a stable nature can be seen to exist only between individuals or between families, determined by territorial considerations and by mutual satisfaction. The only control arises from these considerations, heightened by the Mbuti addiction to certain village foods. However, this fragments the band to such an extent that we can say the band simply ceases to exist, as such, in relationship to any village community. Neither the Chief nor the *capita* has the slightest authority or control over the band; flux renders a lineal interrelationship impossible, and we are left with no more than an agglomeration of person-to-person exchange relationships that may be economically effective but convey no political control to either side, the nuclear family being the largest effective unit, and frequently not even being that.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 828 157 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Balekimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, however, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the 761 one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that 778 death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74 seq., 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear [574] family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display 765 of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the [152] ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[128] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apusi*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f*/*s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f*/*s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*, or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingine*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one never "walks emptily" (*tambe bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs is "*me tambe bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also represents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

4. NOISE, or *ekimi*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

224 vision among the pygmies different than among food-gatherers who have a more direct and immediate dependence
• [574] on hunting. The principles which the pygmies follow are: (1) The biological family is the least common denominator, the basic unit in sharing. No man would think of eating his meat without giving some to his wife and chil-
[574] dren. (2) The next unit in sharing is the family group. Any man who has acquired meat will share some of it with other biological families within his family group, but all the shares may not be equal or equivalent. (3) Each man who participates in a hunt is given a share commensurate with his degree of participation. Thus if men from several family groups combine in a hunt, the meat goes to them, and they share their portions within their family groups by single unit families.

For practical purposes, the chief distinction is between meat acquired by stalking and that acquired by net hunting. In the case of stalking, only one man, or more often two or three, will be involved, and these men may well belong to the same family group. With net hunting, however, the whole camp joins the hunt and the whole camp shares the bag.

When an animal is caught net hunting, a number of people have special rights. The man who owns a hunting dog which chased the animal gets the neck. Other special pieces go to the man in whose net it was caught. However, someone else may have borrowed the net and been tending it at the time, and the net tender thus gets a special piece. Then there are pieces for the men whose women bayed it in, and every degree of participation in the killing is recognized and suitably rewarded.

If they bring in five or six antelope there is enough meat for everyone to eat well that night. One family may

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Government.—There are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp. In making any decisions concerning the whole camp, two factors are involved. The first of these is respect for older people.

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A pygmy will always, in addressing a man of an older age group in any formal situation, call him "senior"; he will listen respectfully to an older man and will always obey any reasonable orders he may give. If a younger man shows disrespect, the other members of the camp will gang up on him and berate him. This respect for age, and for the opinions of wise old men, is the basis of pygmy government.

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Secondly, while the opinions of most of the old men are respected, every man in the camp is entitled to state his own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

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In general it is the older and more experienced men who make the decision, but as some of the old men are considered eccentrics and freaks, little attention is paid to them. Rather, it is an oligarchy of the more respected among the old men, a body with no formal membership or specific composition. In their decisions the pungent remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

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Pygmy Social Organization

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological

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family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

The pygmy camp.—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and twenty-five the average. Each hut contains one man, his wife, or wives, and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number